

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A milk-added coffee beverage characterized by being prepared by adding a strongly basic substance and/or a basic amino acid to coffee component, mixing milk component therewith and then heat sterilizing the mixture.

2. A milk-added coffee beverage according to claim 1, characterized in that the strongly basic substance and/or basic amino acid is added before mixture with milk component.

3. A milk-added coffee beverage according to claim 1 or 2, wherein addition of the strongly basic substance and/or basic amino acid prevents precipitation after the heat sterilization.

4. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein addition of the strongly basic substance and/or basic amino acid reduces the amount of emulsifier and/or thickening agent required.

5. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the pH of the milk-added coffee beverage product is 5.8-7.0.

6. A milk-added coffee beverage according to claim 5, wherein the total amount of emulsifier and thickening agent added is no greater than 1 wt%.

7. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the strongly basic substance is at least one selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, trisodium phosphate and tripotassium phosphate.

8. A milk-added coffee beverage according to claim 7, wherein the amount of the strongly basic substance added is 0.005-0.5 wt%.

*Sub A3* 9. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the basic amino acid is at least one selected from the group consisting of lysine, arginine and histidine.

10. A milk-added coffee beverage according to claim 9, wherein the amount of the basic amino acid added is 0.01-1 wt%.

*Sub A4* 11. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein the amount of sodium bicarbonate added is no greater than 0.14 wt%.

12. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 11, which contains coffee component at 0.1-10 wt% in terms of solid portion.

13. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 12, which contains milk component at 0.1-10 wt% in terms of solid portion.

14. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 13, characterized in that the milk component is cow milk.

15. A milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 14, characterized by containing substantially no sweet components or being only lightly sweetened.

16. A process for producing a milk-added coffee beverage according to any one of claims 1 to 15.

17. A process for producing a milk-added coffee beverage

produced through a step of heat sterilization of coffee component and milk component as the main raw materials, wherein a strongly basic substance and/or basic amino acid used as a pH adjuster is added prior to the heating step while sodium bicarbonate is either not used at all or used at no greater than 0.14 wt%, to reduce the amount of emulsifier and/or thickening agent required and prevent precipitation by the heat sterilization, for production of a rich-flavored milk-added coffee beverage.

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